

# Enlightened Absolutism



# Enlightened Absolutism

Absolutists in the 18<sup>th</sup> century attempted to apply the principles of the Enlightenment in their kingdoms.





# Enlightened Absolutism



Many philosophes supported strong monarchy as the best tool to implement the goals and ideals of the Enlightenment.



**“Let us admit the truth: the arts and philosophy extend to only the few; the vast mass, the common people and the bulk of the nobility, remain what nature has made them, that is to say savage beasts.”**

**-- Frederick the Great to Voltaire**



IT'S A  
TRAP!



**TOLERATION** of religious minorities

**REFORM** of institutions

**ABSOLUTISM**

**PATRONAGE** of the philosophes



**"The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government and I'm here to help."**

**-- Ronald Reagan**

# The Enlightened Absolutists



**Catherine II**  
(Russia)



**Frederick II**  
(Prussia)



**Joseph II**  
(Austria)



Frederick  
“the Great”

*Prussia*





*First*  
**SERVANT**  
*of the State*



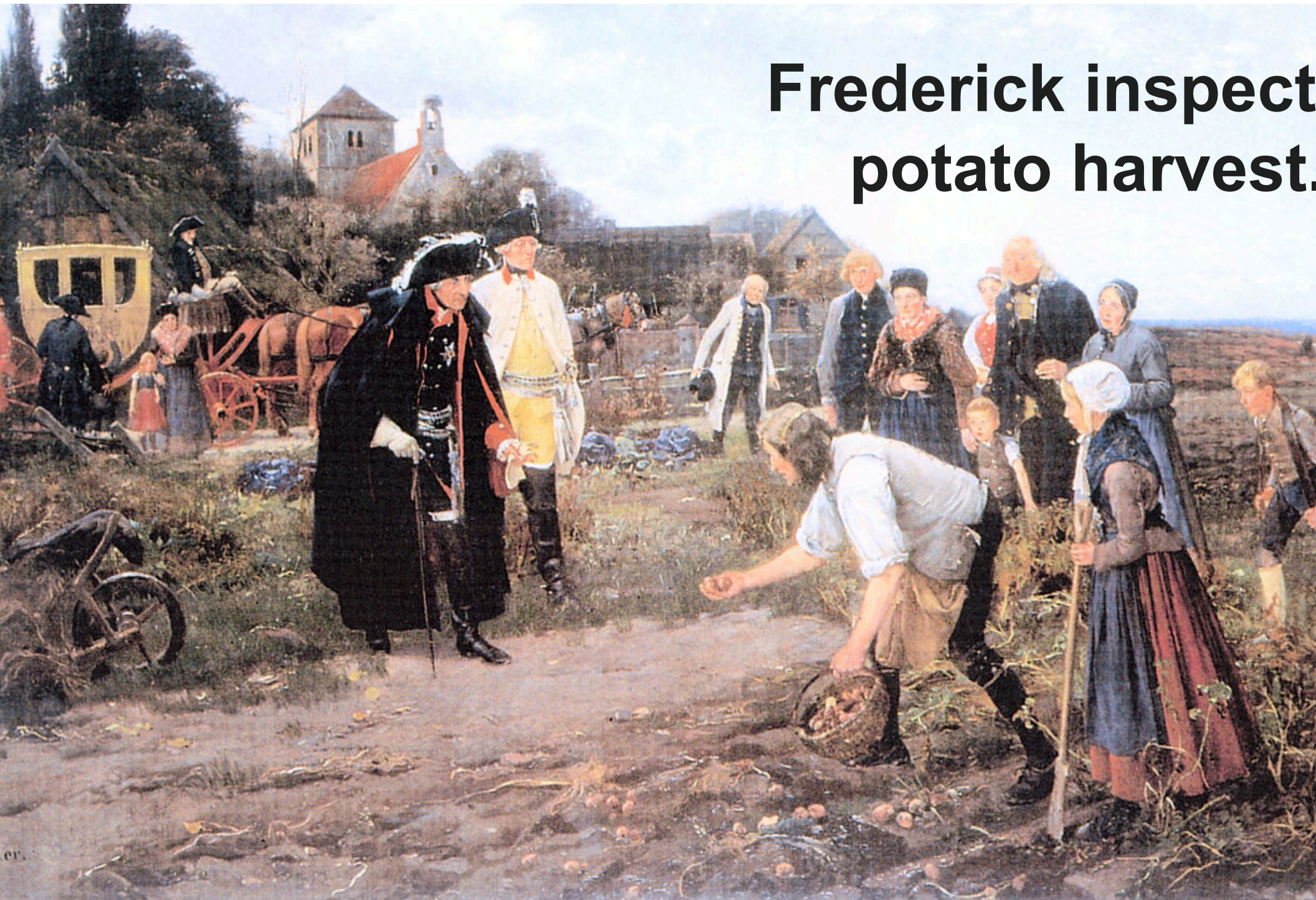
# ATRONAGE




**Frederick corresponded with Voltaire, who was a regular guest at his court before their relationship soured.**



# Frederick inspect potato harvest.

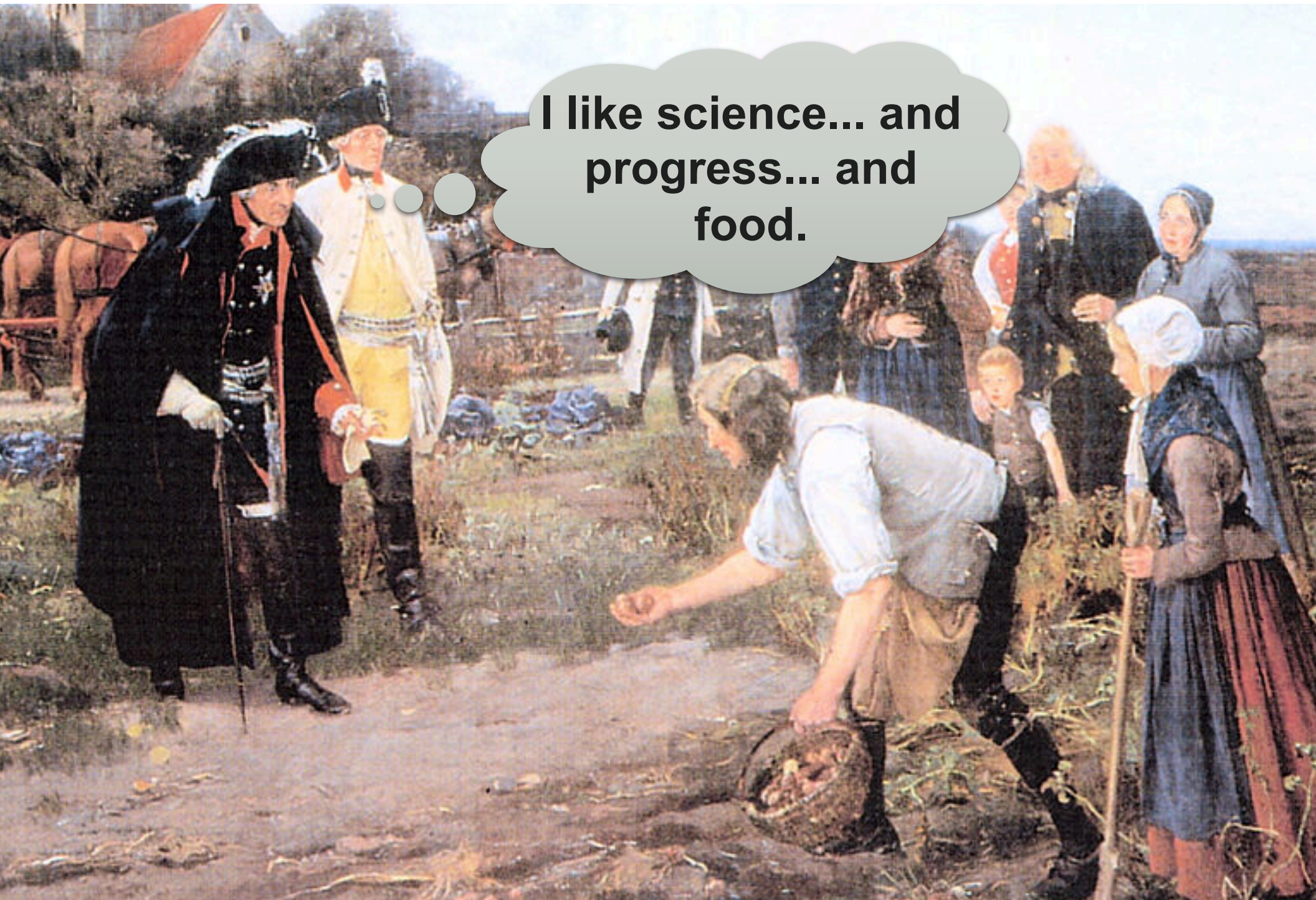






**Potatoes were introduced as a new crop in Prussia during Frederick's reign.**





I like science... and  
progress... and  
food.



# Civil Service Reform

Frederick reformed the Prussian bureaucracy, allowing for men of non-noble birth to fill senior government posts.



# MERITOCRACY

A low-angle, night-time photograph of a grand classical building, likely a government or institutional structure, featuring tall, fluted columns and a pediment. The building is illuminated by warm, golden light, possibly from streetlights or building lights, creating a dramatic effect against the dark sky. In the foreground, a street lamp with three glowing yellow spherical lights is visible, adding to the warm, atmospheric lighting. The word "MERITOCRACY" is overlaid in large, bold, white capital letters across the center of the image.

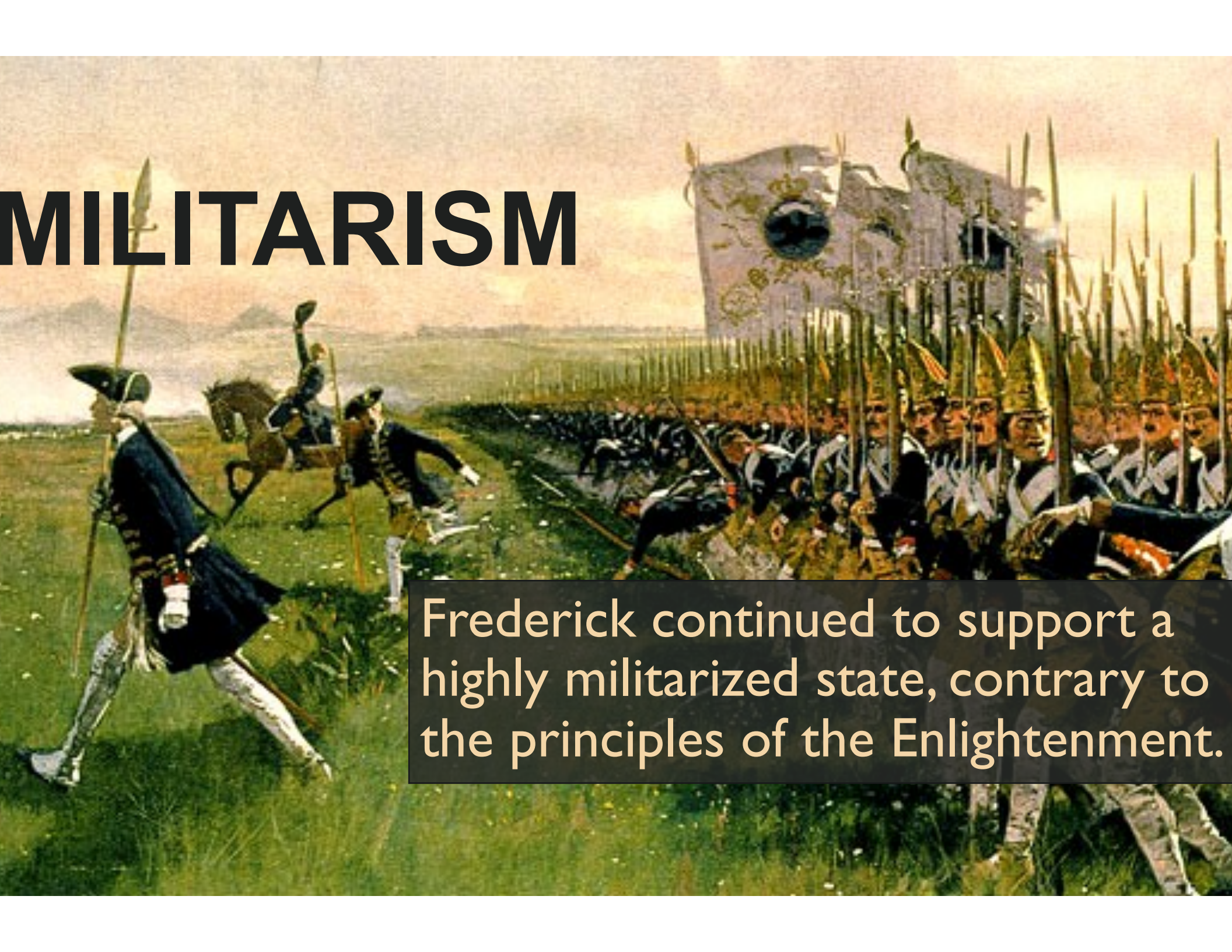
Some rights reserved by la vaca vegetal

# Religious Toleration

*Frederick expanded religious toleration in Prussia, but still favored Protestants for key government posts.*



# MILITARISM



Frederick continued to support a highly militarized state, contrary to the principles of the Enlightenment.





# Frederick II of Prussia

Military Commander

Frederick II was King in Prussia of the Hohenzollern dynasty. He is best known for his military victories, his reorganization of Prussian armies, his innovative drills and tactics, and his final success against great odds in the Seven Years' War. [Wikipedia](#)

**Born:** January 24, 1712, [Kingdom of Prussia](#)

**Died:** August 17, 1786, [Potsdam, Germany](#)

**Full name:** Frederick II

Catherine  
“the Great”

*Russia*





# Assassination?

Catherine's husband, Peter III, died less than a year after taking the throne – likely by assassination.



# PATRONAGE

Catherine purchased  
Diderot's library...

Then paid him a salary  
to be her "librarian."



Some rights reserved by [geishaboy50](#)

# Queens Dig Me!

Catherine corresponded  
with Voltaire, who  
appreciated her flattery.





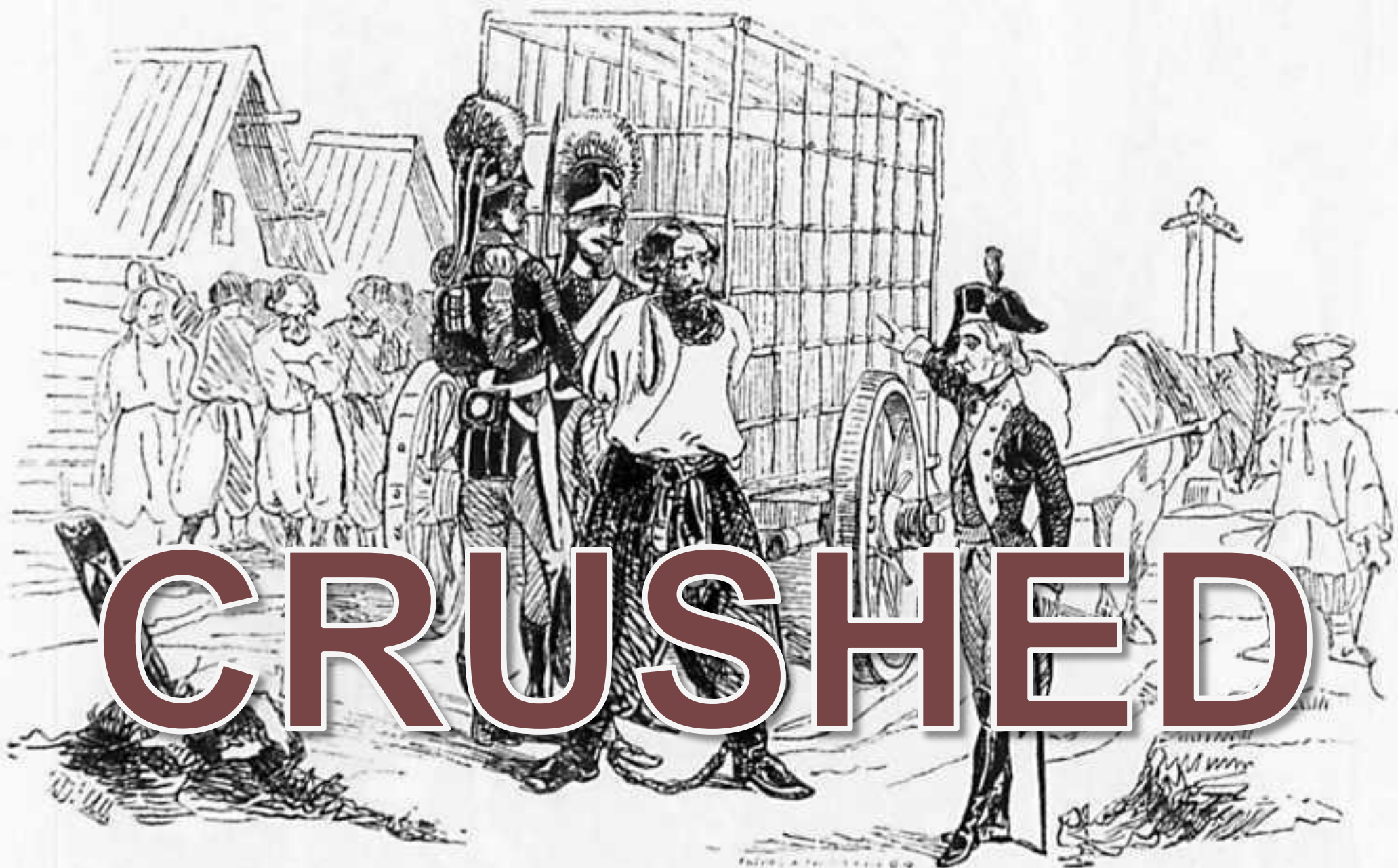


# Pugachev's Rebellion

*1773-1775*

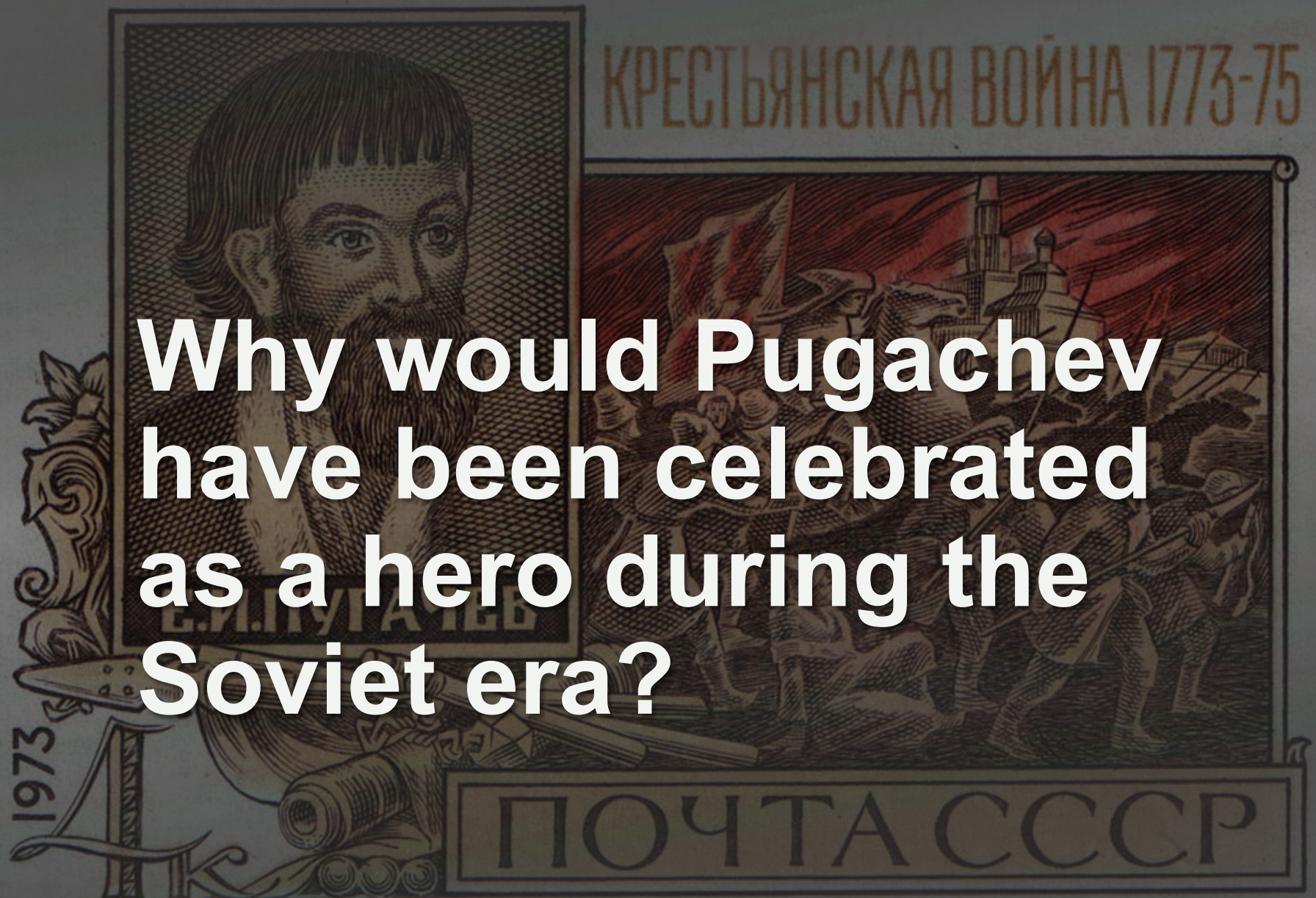
Uprising of peasants &  
Cossacks on the  
Russian frontier







**Why would Pugachev  
have been celebrated  
as a hero during the  
Soviet era?**

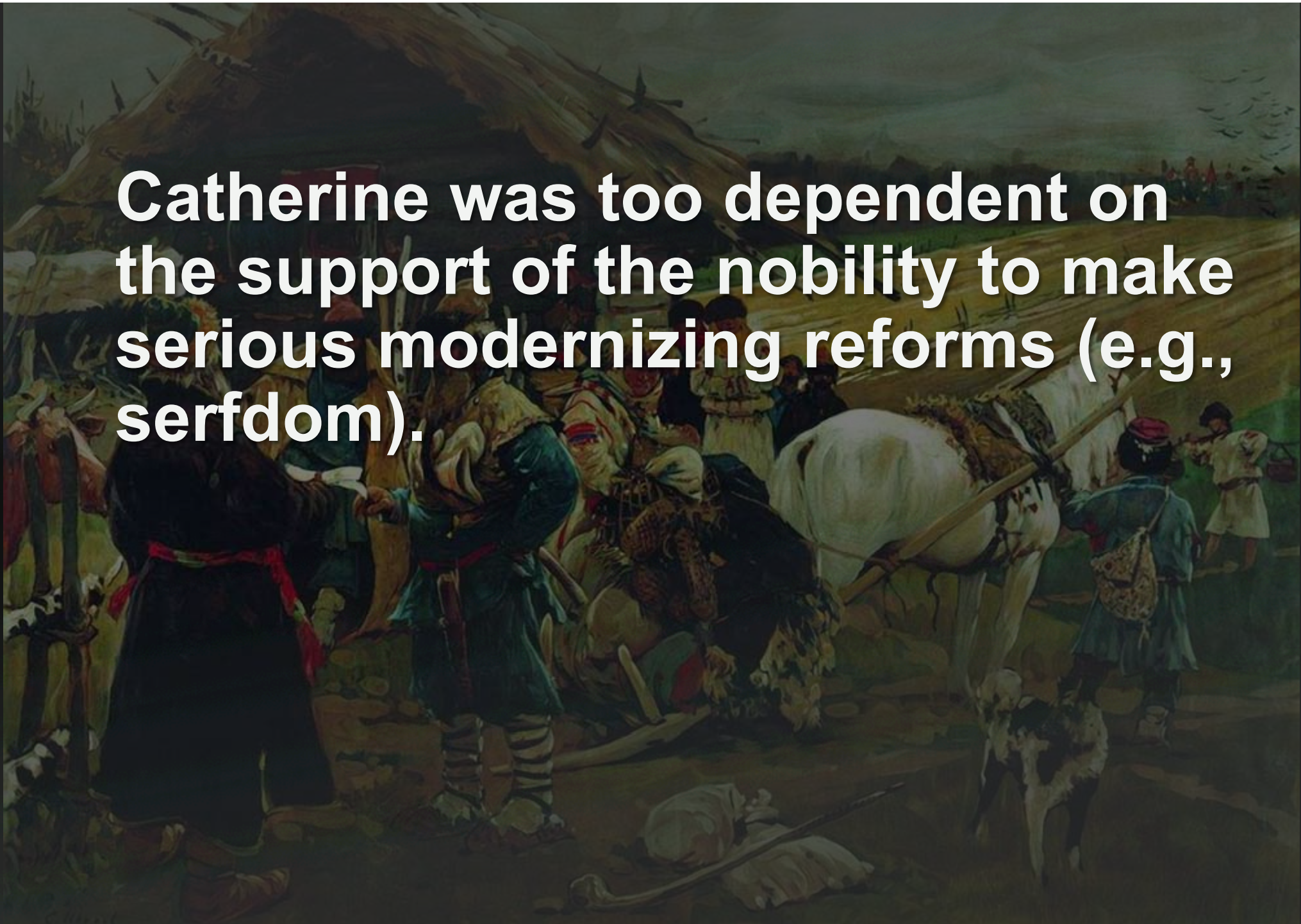








**Catherine was too dependent on the support of the nobility to make serious modernizing reforms (e.g., serfdom).**





# Joseph II

*Austria*



**MOST**  
*Radical*  
**LEAST**  
*Effective*





# Co-Ruler with Maria Theresa-

1765-1780





# Religious Toleration

*Joseph's generous religious  
toleration policy included  
private worship for Jews.*

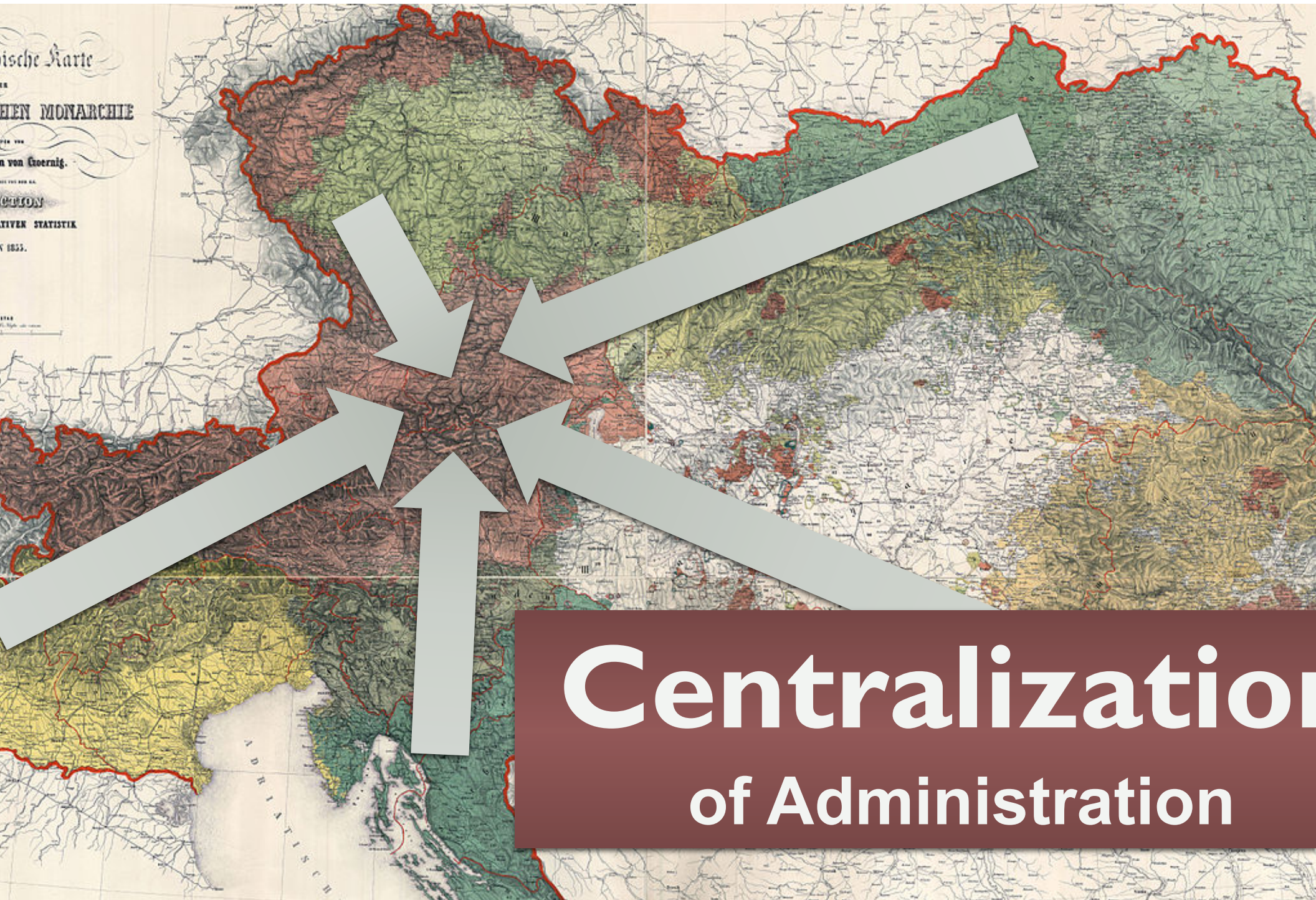


Map of the  
Austrian  
Empire

**Multi-Ethnic Empire**







# Centralization of Administration



# REFORM





# REFORM




**Joseph abolished “serfdom” and granted more rights to peasants (although landlords retained some control).**



**MOST**  
*Radical*  
**LEAST**  
*Effective*





A close-up photograph of a computer keyboard. The focus is on the 'delete' key, which is a large, light-colored key with the word 'delete' printed on it. To its right is another 'delete' key with a small 'x' icon. Above the main 'delete' key is a key with 'fn' printed on it. Below the main 'delete' key is a key with a right curly brace '}' printed on it. The keyboard has a silver or light grey metallic finish.

**Joseph's successors  
undid many of his  
reforms.**

Some rights reserved by M



Here lies Joseph II, who failed in all  
he undertook.”

-- Self-Suggested Epitaph



Some rights reserved by [Chad Mo](#)



# The Enlightened Absolutists



**Catherine II**  
(Russia)




**Frederick II**  
(Prussia)



**Joseph II**  
(Austria)



# Partitions of Poland

A historical map of Central Europe showing the three partitions of Poland. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth territory is divided into three colored regions: a yellow region in the west (Prussia), a green region in the north and east (Russia), and an orange region in the south (Austria). Major cities like Warsaw, Kraków, and Lwów are marked. The map also shows neighboring countries like Prussia, Russia, and Austria, and various rivers and smaller towns.

Map Credit: Halibutt (Wikipedia)

or More, Visit My Website



Follow, Subscribe, and Like!

